

Writing a Five Paragraph Essay



As you progress through school, you will be required to write essays. An essay is a written composition in which you express a certain idea and back it up with statements that support the idea. Most frequently, you will be required to write your essay in a *five paragraph essay* format.

As its name implies, a five paragraph essay consists of five paragraphs. However, the essay itself consists of three parts: an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *conclusion*.

Introduction

The first paragraph of a five paragraph essay is the introduction. You should begin this paragraph with a statement that captures the reader's interest so that the reader will want to continue to read your entire essay. Make your first sentence as interesting as possible. Follow with several sentences that clarify your opening statement. Conclude the paragraph with a thesis statement in which you present what you believe and intend to prove. A good *thesis statement* takes a stand and is very specific.

Body

The body of a five paragraph essay consists of three paragraphs. Each paragraph should be limited to one main idea that supports your thesis statement. The *first paragraph of the body* should contain your strongest argument in support of your thesis. Begin this paragraph by stating your idea. Then follow with two or three sentences containing supporting evidence or examples. Conclude this paragraph with a sentence that sums up what you discussed in the paragraph.

The *second paragraph of the body* should follow the same format as the first paragraph of the body. This paragraph should contain your second strongest argument in support of your thesis statement. The *third paragraph of the body* follows the same format and contains your third strongest argument. In addition to summing up what you have discussed in the paragraph, the last sentence should also indicate that the paragraph contains the final argument you are raising.

Conclusion

The fifth and final paragraph of the essay contains the *conclusion*. This concluding paragraph should repeat your thesis statement in slightly different words than used in your introductory paragraph. It should summarize the three arguments you presented in the body of your essay. Your final sentence should signal that your essay has come to an end. In essence, your concluding paragraph should make it clear to the reader that you believe you have proven what you set out to prove.